provisions of Article IX(1) of the Treaty dealing with settlement of Differences and Disputes.

However, after detailed deliberations, Pakistan Commissioner's proposal that the next meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission be convened in Pakistan with the next three months with a view to resolve the question on the Baglihar Plant be agreement, was agreed to be considered by the Indian Commissioner.

Identification of Draught Areas in the National Water Policy

741. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether adequate measures have been adopted in the new National Water Policy, 2002 to take care of the repeated draughts suffered by large parts of country in the recent years;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the "drought prone areas" being identified so that preventive measures could also be taken in time; and

(c) in what manner Government propose to tackle the growing water scarcity crisis in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The National Water Policy, 2002 on Draught-prone Area Development lays down as:

> "19.1 Drought-prone areas should be made less vulnerable to drought-associated problems through soil-moisture conservation measures, water harvesting practices, minimisation of evaporation losses, development of the ground water potential including recharging and the transfer of surface water from surplus areas where feasible and appropriate. Pastures, forestry or other modes of development which are relatively less water-demanding should be encouraged. In planning water resource development projects, the needs of drought-prone areas should be given priority".

It further lays as:

"19.2 Relief works undertaken for providing employment to drought-stricken population should preferably be for drought proofing".

As per the study conducted by Central Water Commission (1982) covering 99 districts in the country, an area of 51.13 million hectare lying in 315 Talukas of these districts was identified to be Draught prone. Water, being a State subject, schemes of water conservation, including those benefiting drought prone areas, are planned, investigated, implemented and funded by the State Governments out of their own resources and as per their own priorities, since the beginning of the planned development, benefit these drought prone areas. Similarly, an irrigation potential of 4.3 million hectare has already been created by the major and medium schemes under construction, which also partially or fully benefit these drought prone areas.

In order to tackle the growing water scarcity crisis in the country, schemes are planned, formulated, implemented and funded by the State Government out of their own resources and as per their own priorities. Through the concerted efforts of State Government, an irrigation potential of 99.76 million hectare is expected to have been created by the end of 9th Five Year Plan. This has been possible due to construction of 3596 major and medium projects providing 177 BCM of storage of rain water. Another 207.77 BCM of storage is likely to be created through ongoing and proposed projects. To help the State Governments in their efforts to harness the water from natural resources and accelerate creation of irrigation potential by early completion of ongoing schemes, Government of India has launched Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) since 1996-97. Under the programme, financial assistance in the form of central loan is being extended to State Government of help them complete the ongoing irrigation projects in a time bound manner so that the benefits could accrue at the earliest. Accordingly, the Central Loan Assistance (CLA) amounting to Rs. 8480 crore to the State Governments have been provided under AIBP upto end of 2001-02. An outlay of Rs. 2800 crore has been provided for the year 2002-03.

Government of India is also promoting rain water harvesting through Watershed Management Programme, artificial recharge of ground water and roof-top rain water harvesting under the sector reform project of

Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme under the Ministry of Rural Development, for which technical and financial assistance is provided to the State Governments and other implementing agencies. Central Ground Water Board has taken up a Central Sector Scheme on "Studies of Recharge to Ground Water" on pilot basis, under which 174 schemes have been approved in various parts of the country during Ninth Five Year Plan. The scheme has been proposed to be extended during the Tenth Five Year Plan with an outlay of Rs. 150.00 crore.

For meeting future requirements of water, as a long term measure. National Water Development Agency have formulated National Perspective Plan for water resources development which envisages interlinking between various Peninsular rivers and Himalayan rivers for transfer of water from surplus basins to water deficit basins which will accrue benefits of drinking water supply, irrigation, hydro-power, flood control, navigation, fisheries, salinity and pollution control etc.

Rectification of Idus Water Treaty

742. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) what has been the outcome of the meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission held in Delhi on the sharing of water under the Indus Water Treaty between India and Pakistan;

(b) in what manner the Indus Water Treaty has put India to a disadvantageous position; and

(c) in what manner Government propose to rectify this situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) During the meeting, no discussions were held on the sharing of water between India and Pakistan. In the said meeting, India had agreed to consider Pakistan's requests for the Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) to undertake two tours, one in India and another in Pakistan and to have a meeting in Pakistan within three months following the 87th meeting with a view to endeavour to resolve the questions regarding the Baglihar Hydro-Electric Plant on the Chenab Main in Jammu & Kashmir by agreement. India also agreed to consider Pakistan's request for communication of flood flows